Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction

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Item 11 of the agenda
Progress with universalization of the Convention

Report on universalization activities

Submitted by the Chairperson

Addendum

I. Introduction

1. On 17 October 2014, Andorra reported to the ISU that the Parliament approved the accession to the BWC on 16 October 2014. The instrument of accession has been submitted for signature by the heads of State, respectively the French President and the Bishop of La Seu d'Urgell. Andorra hopes to have the instrument signed by the end of the year. At the beginning of December, France reported to the ISU that the French authorities have continued to liaise with Andorra on the issue of its accession to the Convention.

2. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland reported on 13 November 2014 to the ISU that a copy of the instrument of accession of Mauritania has been submitted to the Treaty Section of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Mauritania hopes to submit the original of the instrument to the United Kingdom by the end of the year.

3. On 1 December 2014, the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Myanmar submitted the original instrument of ratification to the three depositary governments, in the presence of the BWC Chairman and the ISU. Consequently, the ISU has been notified by the depositaries that, as of 1 December 2014, Myanmar became a State Party to the Convention.

4. As of 1 December 2014, the Convention has 171 States Parties, with nine signatories and 16 States having neither signed nor ratified the Convention. A total of 25 States are not party to the Convention.

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II. Activities to promote universalization

5. In October 2014, on the margins of the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, the Chairman held bilateral meetings on the universalization of the BWC with the following States not party to the Convention: Andorra, Comoros, Eritrea, Haiti, Nepal, and the United Republic of Tanzania.

6. On 17 November 2014, a letter from the Swiss Minister for Foreign Affairs was sent to the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the following States not party to the Convention: Chad, the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Guinea, Haiti, Kiribati, Liberia, Mauritania, Myanmar, Micronesia, Namibia, Nepal, Samoa, South Sudan, Tuvalu, and the United Republic of Tanzania. The letter raised awareness of the Convention and encouraged these States to join the Convention.

7. On 1 December 2014, during its statement in the general debate of the Meeting of States Parties, Canada, on behalf of the JACKSNNZ group, reported that Australia hosted a visit of senior officials from Myanmar to Canberra in May 2014 and participated in an Australia Group outreach to Myanmar in July 2014.

8. To date, four States parties have reported that they have taken action bilaterally to promote universalization of the Convention in 2014: Australia, France, Germany, and the United States of America. Throughout the year, the ISU has been coordinating with the depositary Governments (the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America) on various universalization related matters.